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Two-Campus Problems: NYU To Move Research Downtown

How much support and how many faculty members are required to build viable research centers on two campuses? The New York University physics department found that with 15 capable investigators at two locations, each group was too small and lacked adequate support to form really strong units. As a consequence and also because it seeks to transform a part-time majority of graduate students into a fulltime one, the department will in the future consolidate research activity at one campus, Washington Square.

The problem of two campuses, downtown at Washington Square and uptown in the Bronx, has long troubled the departments of the university. Actually, the university started downtown but in the early 1900's moved almost all of its offices uptown. Later, in the 1920's Washington Square's

campus began to grow again. As a result, two autonomous physics departments developed over the years, each based on its own undergraduate college, each offering graduate programs that were loosely coordinated.

Faculty at both campuses felt isolated from each other because of the distance between the two. Somewhat later, an informal coordination resulted in the development of complementary research programs at each center. The downtown branch developed its principal strength in theory, especially in high-energy physics, and the uptown branch in experiment, especially in atomic physics and cosmic rays. Of course, some experimental work was carried on downtown and some theory uptown. Nevertheless, many faculty members believed that, with a faculty of only 15 at each campus, each group was too small to form a really strong department. Seminars and colloquia were not particularly well attended; postdoctorals were difficult to attract; and students felt no great attachment to either campus. Another important factor contributing to the lack of cohesion of the graduate program was the fact that NYU took

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\$6 MILLION physics building to house NYU graduate department in about three years.

seriously as part of its mission the service to industry in the urban community. As a result, the majority of its graduate students had always been part-time students who have held jobs in industry during the day. The department had always wished to change this image and become a graduate department with a majority of full-time students. To accomplish this objective required the building of a stronger and more visible department.

An early attempt at administrative consolidation occurred in 1961 when the NYU administration created an all-university department of physics whose head had jurisdiction over both campuses, uptown and downtown. A committee of deans was formed to assist this head in governing the all-university department. Although the problem of the physical separation remained, physics flourished under this set up. In 1964, however, because of the difficulty of managing the all-university departments, the university was forced to undergo some major administrative changes wherein the department head lost some of his budgetary control. As a result the departments began to drift apart again.

In 1965, the physics department proposed to the university administration that its graduate program be located in one center. After a period of considerable discussion, the university, in its drive for excellence, agreed to the consolidation of the graduate departments with the major thrust for growth centering at Washington Square. To create first-class research centers at both campuses seemed an impossible task in view of the costs and total available manpower pool.

So beginning this year some senior members of the uptown staff are spending more of their time downtown. Some graduate courses normally given at University Heights are now given at Washington Square. The entire transfer of the major portion of the graduate activity will obviously have to take place gradually. The move is expected to be completed in about three years, at which time a new \$6 million building will be ready for department occupancy. By that time the department will have initiated new programs in astrophysics and experimental particle physics and will have expanded its solid-state activity.

It also has applied for NSF support for a master's degree program in physics for students who have majored in other fields of science or engineering. Currently there are 275 graduate students, two-fifths of whom are full time. The expectation is to reverse this ratio by building a stronger, more attractive department. NYU still intends to fulfill its function of being of service to the local industrial community, but it will concentrate its efforts for the fully committed student.

NSF Awards \$0.55 million to Missouri at Rolla Department

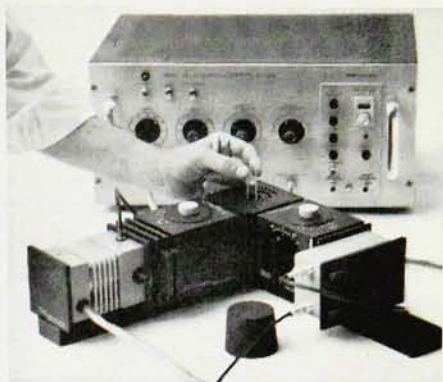
A one-third increase in faculty, more research equipment and enlarged graduate student and postdoctoral support will follow as a result of a \$550 000 grant to the Rolla physics department by the National Science Foundation. The grant comes under the NSF departmental science development program designed to help departments whose existing strength serves as a base for further improvement.

Headed by Harold Fuller, the 20 members of the Rolla physics faculty are responsible for about 150 majors and 55 graduate students. The department produces about 30 BS physics majors annually and has begun to confer PhD's under a program started in 1960. The NSF grant will also contribute toward a new seminar program of visiting lecturers, a faculty-development program of summer leave at advanced laboratories and a visiting-scientist program for furthering research on campus. Recently, the department dedicated a 16 000 square-foot addition to its physics building funded by a \$500 000 state appropriation.

AIP Issues Retrieval Classification Report

The American Institute of Physics information and analysis retrieval division (IARD) has prepared a report on a preliminary, untested classification scheme for all of physics, together with examples of its use. In the system the author will supply the classification along with the document, and editors and reviewers could approve it in the same way they approve the remainder of the paper. This classification would then become an integral

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"Finally, we expect that the availability of convenient and rapid apparatus for decay time measurement will have considerable impact on studies of fluorescence, which have too long depended on assumed and calculated τ values."

We've quoted the last paragraph of an article appearing in *Science*, Vol. 156, May 19, 1967, "Fluorescence Decay Times: Proteins, Coenzymes and Other Compounds in Water," by Raymond F. Chen, Gerald G. Vurek and Nelson Alexander of the National Heart Institute, Bethesda, Md., available from us as a reprint.

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